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AMERICA TO MARRIAGE COUNSELING

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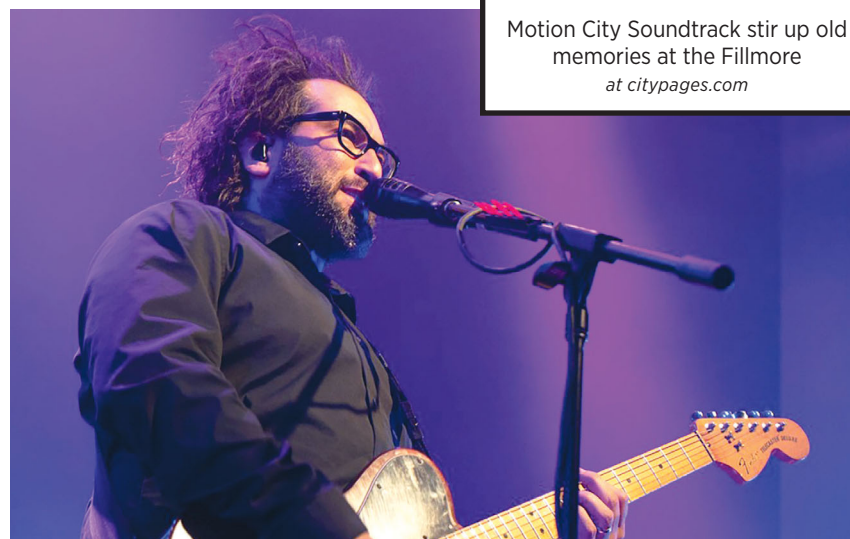
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THE SHORTLIST



NATALIA MENDEZ

Motion City Soundtrack stir up old memories at the Fillmore
at citypages.com

THE STAT SHEET

73,000

People infected globally by COVID-19 (coronavirus) since the outbreak started

1,800

Twin Cities HealthPartners workers who avoided a strike this week after a 17-hour bargaining session

8 years

Since we've had a winter this mild, temp-wise, per the Minnesota DNR Snow and Cold Index

700

Flu outbreaks in Minnesota schools this winter

“Yes, let’s have reps from cities of 100 or fewer people tell us how to properly manage crime in Minneapolis and St. Paul.”

Reader Jason Schmucker responds to “Republican tells Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey ‘Don’t touch me’” at citypages.com

MEET DISCREET

HERE’S AN EYEBROW-RAISING headline from Minnpost: “Nobody can explain why a meeting of the entire Minnesota Legislature is closed to the public.” This year, Peter Callaghan writes, the House and Senate are having an all-day affair called “One Minnesota Legislative Policy Conference,” which is closed to non-Legislature and media. Why? “That’s the first time I’ve ever been asked that,” said Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka (R-Nisswa). “That is a really good question,” said House Speaker Melissa Hortman (DFL-Brooklyn Park). “I actually don’t have a concrete answer for that,” added Senate Minority Leader Susan Kent (DFL-Woodbury). Everyone told Callaghan the closed doors will let members be more open and unified.

POPULAR STORIES

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BRANDI CARLILE all but upstages the Fillmore’s grand opening

Target sorry for
‘MINNESOTA BADGERS’ onesies

From ‘Peanuts’ to ‘Inside Out,’ what **CARTOONISTS** think Minnesota is like

6 Minneapolis-St. Paul
SOUPS TO SLURP this February

NOT THEIR FIGHT

Judge tosses conservatives from felon voting rights case

A Ramsey County judge had some choice words for Minnesota’s main voter suppression group last week, ruling the Minnesota Voters Alliance is not allowed to intervene in a landmark case that could restore the vote for felons on probation, parole, or another form of supervised release.

The American Civil Liberties Union is currently suing Secretary of State Steve Simon, Minnesota’s chief elections official, to restore voting rights during the probation period following a felony conviction. The ACLU argues it’s unconstitutional to disenfranchise those people, a group that counts 52,000 Minnesotans.

Minnesota Voters Alliance, a confoundingly named anti-voting rights group we covered at length in a cover story earlier this month, quickly filed to intervene in the ACLU’s suit.

The MVA accused Attorney General

Keith Ellison of failing to defend the state law merely because he doesn’t like it. Its case argued that individuals are barred from suing the government based on alleged violations of the state constitution, and that Ellison could’ve had the ACLU suit dismissed had he only pointed that out. Instead, the attorney general allowed the litigation to proceed at taxpayer expense.

That’s a Bad Legal Take in Ramsey County Judge Richard H. Kyle’s opinion.

Kyle ruled Wednesday that MVA has no business intervening in the ACLU’s lawsuit. Being a taxpayer doesn’t give someone an automatic right to butt into any court case where lawyers are paid by public funds, the judge explained. Otherwise, you could intervene in criminal prosecutions, cases being handled by legal aid attorneys, and any and all lawsuits filed against the state.

“The subject matter of the litigation—restoring voting rights to individuals whose



GLEN STUBBE, STAR TRIBUNE

criminal sentences have not been fully discharged—has nothing to do with money, let alone taxpayer funds,” Kyle wrote in his analysis.

He went on:

“MVA is claiming taxpayer standing on the basis that the Attorney General’s Office is causing unnecessary litigation by failing to argue MVA’s favored defense (lack of private cause of action), but by intervening in this case, MVA will create more work for the Attorney General’s Office and thus use more public funds.

“MVA argues that it is attempting to safeguard taxpayer funds, when in reality, its intervention is causing the expenditure of those funds.”

Kyle added Ellison still has the chance to take MVA’s advice and raise the defense that people can’t just sue the government for civil rights under the Minnesota constitution.

However, that claim might turn out to be just another waste of time and money, as many prior cases have found in favor of Minnesotans who did just that. —SUSAN DU

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A MINNESOTA MOVEMENT INVITES A DIVIDED AMERICA TO MARRIAGE COUNSELING

I. CAMPUS POLITICS

Seven liberal St. Olaf students, on campus one snowy Sunday in January, quietly regarded a whiteboard populated with ugly stereotypes about Democrats.

Entitled snowflakes. Socialists in love with big government handouts. Politically correct, fiscally irresponsible hippies. Unpatriotic.

Coming up with these was easy. They laughed as they did it. But now they had to dissect the kernel of truth underlying the cliché, and the exercise was slightly cringeworthy.

“Some people believe in regulating discourse and suppressing new ideas,” declared freshman Markian Romanyshyn, an environmentalist from Washington.

Next door, six conservative students agonized over how to describe Republicans’ feelings about gay rights.

One struggled to shape her thoughts aloud: When religious people oppose homosexuality, it can be wrongly construed as hatred.

“It’s not hatred. It’s a moral stance,” another clarified.

“Some people are completely in support of LGBT,” interjected freshman Keerthana Babu, a future pastor from California, speaking for herself.

The students have signed up for a red-blue workshop with an organization called Better Angels, which specializes in depolarization of the politically fraught. They came by way of Students for Life, the anti-abortion club, and the

Institute for Freedom and Community, St. Olaf’s first-in-the-nation center for free inquiry.

St. Olaf is one of two liberal arts schools in Northfield, a small city on the banks of the Cannon River, an hour south of the Twin Cities. Like most colleges, its student body leans left. But it’s also a Lutheran school, attended by liberals and conservatives who derive their contending politics from the same faith.

While other campuses have rioted over right-wing speakers like Milo Yiannopoulos and Jeff Sessions and punished student

By **SUSAN DU**

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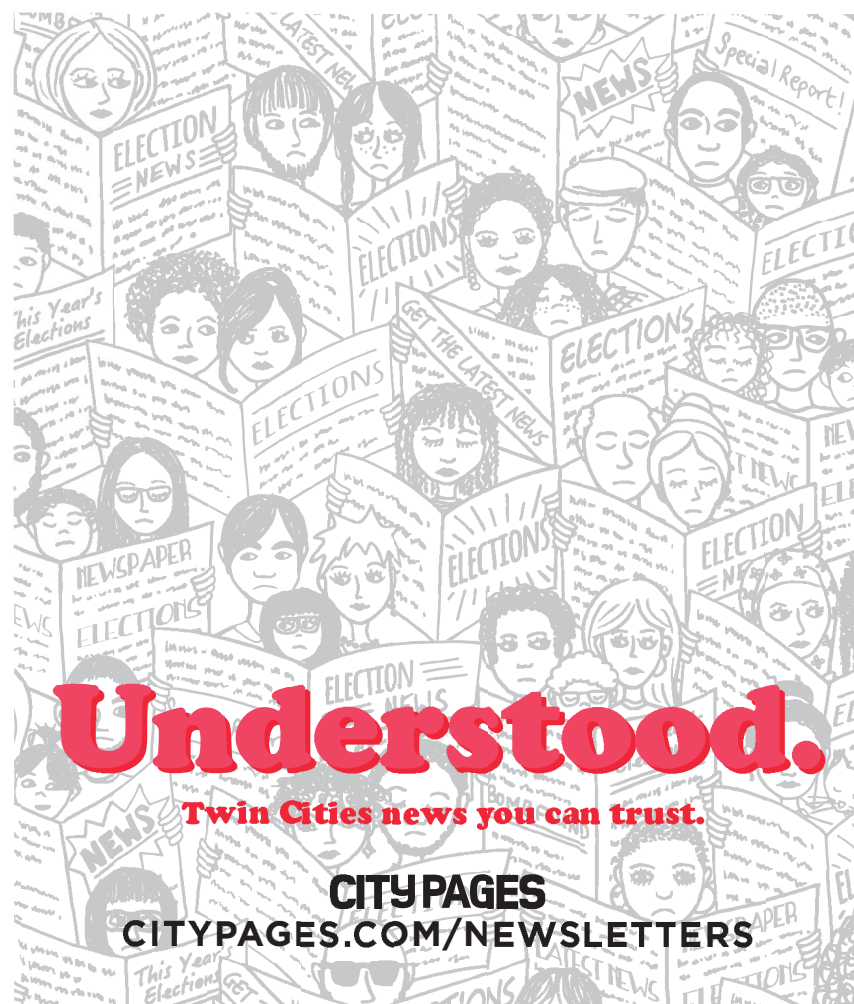
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AARON LAVINSKY

newspapers like the Daily Northwestern for reporting it, St. Olaf has mostly rejected the bait. In October, a spate of white nationalist stickers appeared on campus lamp posts. Students scraped them off. The year before, leaflets sprinkled on cars vilified women who wore skin-tight clothes and demanded “the right to murder babies.” Students for Life quickly disavowed whoever left them. The club’s posters are occasionally vandalized. Members say it’s nothing serious.

Not since the immediate aftermath of Donald Trump’s election has any crisis engulfed St. Olaf. At the time, an outbreak of racist messages targeting black students forced the school to reckon with its maltreatment of minorities in the past and lack of diversity today. An activist ultimately admitted staging her own death threat to manipulate a conversation about race.

These days are quieter. Like détente at Thanksgiving, students with opposing views often maintain civility by not exchanging words. A 2018 Gallup poll found that 61 percent of college students believe campus climate prevents them from speaking freely. St. Olaf is no exception.

Freshman violinist Addie Jo Lambrecht, a conservative, signed up with Better Angels expecting to defend all her beliefs against liberal condemnation. When the reds and blues convened to compare the problems each had with their own side—which in politics would have been considered conceding ground to the enemy—she was warmed by the results.

Conservatives value strong family units and local governance. They suspect federal welfare of replacing people’s responsibility to hold each other up, Lambrecht says.

Nevertheless, she believes former Gov. Scott Walker’s zero-sum approach to taxation was disastrous for her home state of Wisconsin, where her prison guard father didn’t get a raise for more than a decade

A Trump supporter wades through a crowd of protesters during Trump’s October rally at Target Center.

and union benefits for teachers like her mother were replaced by merit-based raises that empowered school districts to reward their yes-men and punish dissent.

“Our infrastructure was falling apart, and it was not good. Like, you live in Wisconsin. You can’t just let your roads be,” she said. “You can’t just go around slashing everything.”

Leander Krawinkel, a German exchange student with aspirations for public office, said American and German liberals seem to share a similar angst over national identity, unable to express pride in their country for fear of being misunderstood as the sort of people who think all the world beneath them.

“Nationalism is: My country is the best, we are superior. Patriotism says, ‘I love and I’m proud of my identity, I’m happy to share these experiences with others, and it’s why I want to stand up for others,’” he said. “I think as a liberal it is very, very important that you’re proud of where you’re from, or if you’re not proud, you have ways to change that.”

Conservative students worried Republicans weren’t appealing to minorities and wondered why environmentalism wasn’t a bigger deal to a party that purportedly protects local communities. Liberals vented their frustration with activist culture and its moral veneer of calling out injustice without doing the work of enacting constructive change.

No one changed sides at the end of the day. But everyone seemed relieved.

II. THE MARRIAGE COUNSELOR

On the eve of the last presidential election, popular University of Minnesota couples

Harriet Bart, *Pendulum*, 2003. Collection of the artist.



Harriet Bart: *Abracadabra and Other Forms of Protection*

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Just what makes CBD products and brands “craft,” anyhow?

In a surge of excitement — and competition — for the best CBD and hemp products, it is often too easy to be led astray by misleading and at times dishonest representations.

At the forefront of these phis is the pretension that some large, massively-funded brands are “craft” CBD. Though the question emerges with wrinkles, caveats and complications, Nothing But Hemp chatted with Minny Grown CBD’s Zach Rohr to find out the true meaning of “craftcannabis.”

Zach founded Minny Grown CBD to offer a truly local and hand-grown and cultivated hemp and CBD experience for Minnesotans, provided by Minnesotan farmers and processed at Minny Grown’s facilities in Cannon Falls. Rohr compared the need for hand-grown, lovingly-raised cannabis to an easy analogy in the food industry.

While big box stores may be interested only in their profit margins when dealing with meatpacking plants across the country and the globe, an entire network of local farmers and ranchers has sprung up where people are conscious enough of how they consume and what they put in their bodies.

“We’re really trying to produce something locally and give to people who are from here. I think there’s a lot to be said for these phytocannabinoids that are produced in the Minnesota sun. It is the same thing with food,” Zach said. “Eat what is in your area seasonally.”

Rohr said while larger mega-grower hemp operations may excel at simply extracting CBD isolates or manufacturing hundreds of acres mechanically for uses in textiles, rope and other industrial applications, nothing quite compares to the personal touch when it comes to CBD wellness products.

Maybe that’s why Minny Grown CBD is both a local favorite and an award-winner for its full-spectrum organic brand products.

“We’re focused on creating these unique cannabinoid profiles through our full spectrum oil because it’s not the CBD isolate, it’s not these huge extractors with 2,000 pounds an hour,” Zach said. “It is really maintaining the environment throughout the extraction process. It’s no secret that the plant works best as one, there’s a reason why the plant naturally produces these cannabinoids, and that’s what we’re trying to capture and put into our products.”

While combines, CBD isolates and hundreds if not thousands of acres of industrial hemp may make for a mediocre, widely-distributed hemp product, no reasonable person would compare that to a craft product, Rohr said.

Take the example of beer: You likely have a favorite nationally or internationally distributed beer, often with a lower alcohol content and overall quality than one you might encounter at a small local brewery you might visit. The key difference for Zach Rohr? You’ll never meet the brewer of that mega-brand.

He takes pride in the handful of acres and the handful of farmer partners Minny Grown CBD works with to create true craft hemp products. Because to him, less is more when it comes to wellness CBD.

“We know where each plant came from without a doubt,” Zach said. “I can look at a bag and basically point to you on a map where that bag came from, who that came from, who the farmer was and how they got involved in hemp. That’s what makes things craft.”

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SUSAN DU

therapist Bill Doherty saw the outbreak of a new type of marital discord—Democrat women threatening to divorce their Republican husbands if they voted for Donald Trump.

These were couples who were in counseling for other problems, who in some cases had been married for decades, and whose life-long political affiliation was no secret.

But to the liberals, Trump personified evil itself, whereas the George Bushes might have just represented conservative values. He was an existential—Dictionary.com’s 2019 word of the year—threat to the very survival of the country.

According to a 2019 Public Religion Research Institute poll, far more Republicans and Democrats alike would object to their child marrying someone of the opposite political party than someone of a different race.

The former president of the Minnesota Republican Party posited that “Barack Obama had an imperial presidency.” Among Doherty’s liberal friends, there were people who predicted, unequivocally, that Trump was a fascist who’d never leave office.

Doherty is a no-nonsense 75-year-old who suffers no Twitter. This was the most polarized America he’d ever seen. People used to take the purple prose of political propaganda with a grain of salt, he thought. Now they held it close to heart, with everyone everywhere outraged all the time.

He considered assembling a corps of citizen therapists to heal America’s wounds. Later, the startup nonprofit Better Angels asked him to be its founding therapist. He set out to create a process that could bring passionate partisans together without insulting anybody’s intelligence, and without igniting war.

In the summer of 2017, Better Angels embarked on a cross-country bus tour. Doherty found himself part of a motley

Better Angels organizer Bruce MacKenzie moderates a red-blue workshop at his alma mater, St. Olaf.

fellowship including a Tea Party Republican as bus driver, a liberal Iranian American as events coordinator, an obligatory millennial social media guru, and David Blankenhorn, the former gay marriage opponent who changed his mind in 2012.

They kicked off from Dayton, Ohio with a concert. Bleeding-heart hippie Peter Yarrow of Peter, Paul and Mary and country star Richard Lynch, who’d founded the local Tea Party, played a duet of “Puff the Magic Dragon.” Then Better Angels cut through the Midwest

People used to take the purple prose of political propaganda with a grain of salt.

to New England, carried on through the mid-Atlantic states, and swung down through Virginia.

Along the way, they invited staunchly divided people to group therapy. The ground rules defy impulse. There would be no telling the other side their fears were exaggerated, and no fact-checking of opinions. No assigning motives to strangers. No trying to convince anybody to change their mind.

Some people expected fight club. But what they got was a safe space with a twist. Everyone got to express themselves, which meant everyone also had to be quiet for some stretch of time and listen to conflicting points of view.

“Democracy is a rough sport,” Doherty says. “We’re not going to protect people



HOWARD LIPIN

from hearing ideas that 50 million of their fellow Americans believe and half of the Congress. Even though I think there could be some people who could be bothered by that."

Better Angels' depolarization workshops—named after a line in a speech Abraham Lincoln gave on the brink of Civil War—are now in all 50 states. They cover how to deal with warring relatives, how to have rational conversation without flying off the handle, how to question one's own assumptions. Each red-blue faceoff is run by a pair of moderators, one from each side. Membership costs \$12 a year.

California has the most members, but Minnesota boasts the most per capita. Better Angels is actively promoting its model among colleges, activist groups, and charities.

The people who show up seem to occupy different moral universes. Still, they self-select according to some commonalities, Doherty says. Many of them love someone on the other side. All of them have conceptualized a bigger meta-problem with America than whichever party is in power, and worry that a divided people won't stand a chance against the world's looming threats.

The process assumes most people can be reasoned with. It's discovering that policy divisions among Americans aren't nearly as strong as the emotional ones. The average American is somewhat suspicious of government, and worried about big business too, Doherty says after a few years of this work.

"But there's a tendency now to confuse policy with underlying values. That if you believe in a certain policy that has racist effects, then you must intend those effects," he says. "If I hear you're against Obamacare, particularly if I've absorbed all the rhetoric, then maybe you want grandma to die on the street."

Ken Nwadike, founder of the Free Hugs Project, films himself offering indiscriminate love at Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders rallies. The result: footage of Trump supporters threatening to punch him and saying, "I don't want any drugs."

People also tend to identify the opposing party with its most extreme factions, Doherty says, recalling a conversation with a red leader who insisted the violence of Antifa was intrinsic to the left, while white nationalist neo-Nazis were just fringe lunatics completely detached from the conservative movement.

In couples counseling, "That's what's called a self-serving bias."

III. BATTLE ROYALE

In the fall of 2017, Oprah Winfrey gathered a focus group of seven Trump supporters and seven detractors on CBS's *60 Minutes*. They sat around an oversized table under a spotlight as Winfrey lobbed a series of America's juiciest polemics into the mix. Did the Trump campaign collude with Russia to win the election? Why would he say there were "fine people" on both sides of the white nationalist march in Charlottesville? Were liberal tactics destroying the country?

A screaming melee ensued. Participants left portending civil war.

Winfrey caught up with the group six months later. They were apparently hungry enough for connection that they'd gone out of their way to stay in touch. They talked—and fought—regularly via Facebook group chat. They watched hockey and went to target practice. They still couldn't agree on anything to do with Trump, but they did start seeing each other as complex people with conflicting feelings.

Bill Doherty intended for Better Angels to achieve the same outcome—without the


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JEFF WHEELER

initial brawling. Some participants start out loathing the other side, convinced their leaders are powermongers and their followers fools who vote against their own interests. Doherty denies his goal is to move people toward the center, but to show them everyone has something to contribute.

Some of his expectations fly in the face of popular culture. Doherty, who admits he has a lot of hope for people, doesn't think much of social media. A 2019 Pew Research Center study found 10 percent of people on Twitter are responsible for 80 percent of the tweets. He prescribes analog conversations.

In November, Better Angels invited Congressmen Dean Phillips (D) and Pete Stauber (R) to test their process.

Phillips and Stauber are part of the Problem Solvers Caucus, a bipartisan alliance that requires Democrats and Republicans to join in pairs and endorses legislation supported by at least three-quarters of its members. Since 2017, the group has steered Congress clear of a couple government shutdowns.

It's also been criticized by the right and the left as a centrist scheme to preserve the status quo.

Last summer, Senate Republicans and House Democrats clashed over immigration enforcement funding and humanitarian standards for asylum-seeking migrants. Democrats wanted, among other things, soap, toothbrushes, and a two-meter-square space for every individual. The Senate leader vowed to forestall all their demands.

Democratic members of the Problem Solvers Caucus took it on themselves to push through border funding in return for some safeguards for children, including a 90-day limit on holding them in temporary intake facilities, and a requirement to notify lawmakers within 24 hours of a child's death in custody. They and their Republican counterparts traveled down to the border to witness conditions for themselves.

An anti-Trump protester confronts a Trump supporter outside the Amsoil Arena in Duluth following the president's rally in June 2018.

The chair of the Progressive Caucus, who wanted to keep fighting, renamed Democrats who compromised the "Child Abuse Caucus." Others criticized them for giving hardline Republicans a pass to call themselves problem-solvers when they haven't earned it.

In October, Phillips and Stauber's congressional staff attended a Better Angels workshop in Forest Lake. Political operatives trained to listen for things to refute were encouraged to be honest. They talked about how they grew up and where their values came from. They quizzed each other on policy.

The political world is black and white, and neither side ever publicly admits their ideas have downsides, says Zach Rodvold, Phillips's chief of staff. "There's actually a lot of gray area in public policy, and this exposed that. I think both sides walked away realizing the other was aware of that."

Rodvold says win-at-all-costs campaigning drove him out of politics after 2016. Democracy had become a blood sport. Operatives had to own their part. He told everyone he was going to get a career change.

He returned to support Phillips, who ran a clean campaign with the express purpose of breaking Washington's gridlock.

In this case, Minnesota's western suburbs voted for the candidate who didn't spend millions on false attack ads.

"A majority of people say they want to see both sides work together, they want compromise, they want civility," Rodvold says. "But they vote for people who don't adhere to those values and those principles."

It's a cognitive dissonance he's yet to understand.

"The reality is we're divided. There's no other way to get anything done." **CP**




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BY SARAH BRUMBLE

Those who think of Stillwater as a classic riverfront town likely haven't driven slightly upriver on MN-95. A sign entering Marine on St. Croix reads "Population 689," and though its residents number far fewer than I'd expected, nothing would prepare me for downtown Marine. It's listed on the National Register of Historic Places thanks to its storybook gazebo, noon-time whistle, and Minnesota's oldest general store, frozen in time. Everything was coated in glistening, melting snow like that shit on fake Christmas trees.

And then there's Robyn Dochterman, waving and smiling from the stoop of her teensy workshop (brown, easily mistaken for an elegant woodshed) beneath a small forest. Walking closer, I see she's wearing a hoodie embroidered with a bold, even more endearing Doritos logo.

Dochterman owns St. Croix Chocolate Co. with her wife, Diedre Pope. Dochterman's workspace, where she's the company's sole chocolatier, was both kitchen and public storefront until business exceeded its miniscule square footage. Inside, it smells like huffing a bag of M&Ms.

This makes me gasp because, well, it's hard not to. Dochterman just good-naturedly shrugs and says, "I'm noseblind to it. I might smell it first thing in the morning, but that's it," touching on what seems like the one drawback to her job.

Earlier that week, news reached Marine that its tiny chocolate company had earned a five-star designation from the International Chocolate Salon. Only seven other chocolatiers in the nation were awarded five stars for 2019.

"This is the first time I've done the whole year of [competitions]," Dochterman explains.

Dochterman didn't set out to become Marine's Willy Wonka. When the economy began to crumble in 2008, she took it as a sign from the universe to start planning moves beyond media, despite spending the previous 13 years working as a web editor for the Star Tribune.

"I took a buyout, and kind of recovered from intense journalism for a bit, and I thought I was going to bake bread," she says, laughing about realizing that meant waking up at 3 a.m. daily. "So: not bread."

What Dochterman has learned to do with chocolate—beginning with a continuing ed program at Chicago's French Pastry School, sustained in the decade since by her insatiable curiosity—is astounding. To

WONKA ON MARINE

Inside the award-winning St. Croix Chocolate Co.



SARAH BRUMBLE

earn any stars from the Salon, chocolatiers must compete in a sort of chocolate gauntlet including disciplines like chocolate bars, truffles, drinking chocolate, toffees, a Valentine's theme, and more. Final rankings are based on cumulative scores throughout a calendar year.

In November, Dochterman earned gold for Best Overall Truffle Artistry for her "Koi Inyodo." Opening a box stenciled like a shipping crate revealed two koi fish hand-painted to look like they're "swimming" in a yin-yang formation. One of the koi truffles was filled with yuzu ganache and roasted buckwheat praline; the other featured honey ganache with a black sesame seed crunch. Separately, her Hot Hot Cocoa—which folded four kinds of ground chiles, vanilla, and cinnamon into thin, dissolvable quills—took home top awards from both the Scovies (which originate in New Mexico, honoring the world's best spicy food products) and the Salon's spicy chocolate category. "It makes the chocolate itself hot without your brain knowing quite why," she explains. "You just add as much as you want to any hot beverage. It's really fun."

Despite these accolades, Dochterman says she approached the Salon series as more of a challenge than seeking street cred. "The contests make me slow down and think about how I can use this ingredi-

ST. CROIX CHOCOLATE CO.

11 Judd St., Marine on St. Croix
stcroixchocolateco.com

ent, package things..." she trails off for a second. "It just makes me think in a different way."

Still, what Dochterman most enjoys making isn't something the Salon measures. "I do something that almost nobody else does, and I absolutely adore doing..." Before me, she sets two pumpkins and an egg—each 3D, hefty, and up to nine inches large. They're swirled and stamped with a rainbow of cocoa butter mimicking psychedelic porcelain. Taking off their lids reveals a hollow center in a more traditional hue. Again, I gasp as she assures me they're 100 percent edible, pure chocolate, and shelf-stable (provided you have air conditioning). Pope is stuck convincing customers that they aren't holding actual jewelry boxes.

But truffles and bonbons keep the lights on. Long ago, Dochterman decided that if she was going to do these, she'd do them her way. "You can see the swirly thing? It's almost kind of a signature for me," she says, gesturing to trays of part-made raspberry and passionfruit truffles. "You see really cool marbles with glass in the middle? I'm always inspired by those. I like to give it not just something on the

surface, but the longer you look at it the more you see."

As a substance, chocolate is magical enough in its own right, even before Dochterman adds flavors and textures and luster dust. Studies have verified that euphoric feeling we get from snapping into a pure bar of the dark stuff is not a placebo effect. Chocolate contains a veritable cocktail of our brain's favorite drugs: caffeine, serotonin, tryptophan, a smidge of amphetamines, plus tiny amounts of a marijuana-like neurotransmitter called anandamide... and 295 more chemicals to boot. It's best not to question why people want their chocolate, even if they're not actually high as tits off a bonbon.

Along this line, one of the most infamous chocolate fights in more than four millennia took place in Chiapas, Mexico circa 1630. The short version is: A local bishop tried to ban consuming chocolate *just in church* and wound up dead for it. The local women banded together in a fit of rebellion and poisoned the clergyman with... drinking chocolate. The man's contemporary, Dominican monk Thomas Gage, left a salacious account of the matter in his diaries, which also included detailed notes about how he preferred his daily two-to-three cups of chocolate prepared.

With an eye toward this history in mind, Dochterman just released a smart new product designed to educate self-proclaimed "chocololics" on cacao's more subtle tasting notes, while sneaking in as much of chocolate's modern production techniques as her journalistic background allowed. This Fine Chocolate Taste Journey (available in four- or eight-piece sets) escorts recipients on a world tour of chocolate, via samples cast to resemble life-sized tree frogs—sorry for biting off your heads, little guys!—as they're the anthropocene's ultimate indicator species. Each frog comes separately bagged with an accompanying note card describing the technique for harvesting that bean, its terroir, and how these elements manifest in its flavor.

Though many of St. Croix Chocolate Co.'s creations can be purchased online and shipped to the moon, when weighing the cost of that 50-ish minute drive east into the Eden of Marine on St. Croix and Dochterman's world of delights, consider that another thing worth fighting for is your departure from the humdrum. Exceedingly fine chocolates and cigars of fiery elixirs are the perfect excuse to leave town. Rest assured they're both perfectly legal (now), and have been deemed the finest available anywhere. ☐

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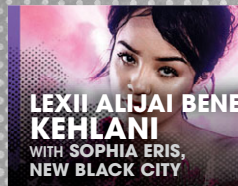
FEB
20



RAPHAEL SAADIQ
WITH JAMILA WOODS, DJ DUGGZ
FIRST AVENUE

FEB
22

FIRST AVENUE MAINROOM



LEXII ALIJAI BENEFIT FT. KEHLANI
WITH SOPHIA ERIS,
NEW BLACK CITY

FEB
19



LIL TJAY
WITH THE KID LAROI

FEB
20



ALL THAT 90s PARTY
WITH DJ DAVE PAUL, DJ MARCO

FEB
21



DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL
WITH THE GET UP KIDS

FEB
25



GO SHOW WITH IRATION
WITH IYA TERRA, BALLYHOO!,
THE RIES BROTHERS

FEB
28



SAINT MOTEL
WITH KOLARS

FEB
29



MOD SUN
WITH 7715, NEW HIPPIYS
(LOSTINVEGAS, WINTER
HAVENS, & JIMMY BENNETT),
PABLO DYLAN, AYE B

MAR
01



RAILROAD EARTH
WITH OLD SALT UNION

MAR
06



YONDER MOUNTAIN STRING BAND
WITH CHRIS CASTINO
FT. CHICKEN WIRE EMPIRE

MAR
07



BEST COAST
WITH MANNEQUIN PUSSY

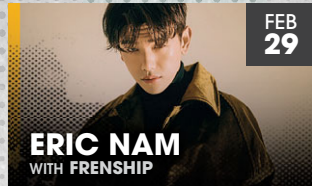
MAR
09

PALACE THEATRE



BIG HEAD TODD AND THE MONSTERS
FT. HAZEL MILLER
WITH LOS COLOGNES

FEB
21



ERIC NAM
WITH FRENSHIP

FEB
29



DRIVE-BY TRUCKERS
WITH KELSEY WALDON

MAR
14



KING GIZZARD & THE LIZARD WIZARD
WITH LEAH SENIOR

APR
23



MIKA

APR
26

FITZGERALD THEATER



LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO

MAR
01



KAMASI WASHINGTON
WITH ASTRALBLAK

MAR
04



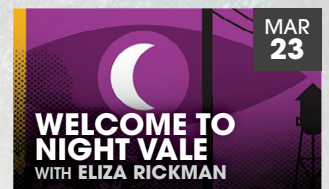
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LIVE
LIFE ON THE VERTICAL
WITH MARK SYNNOTT

MAR
08



WINE & CRIME PODCAST

MAR
21



WELCOME TO NIGHT VALE
WITH ELIZA RICKMAN

MAR
23

FINE LINE



ECHOSMITH
W/ WEATHERS, JAYDEN BARTELS

FEB 21



AMERICAN NIGHTMARE
W/ CEREMONY

FEB 22



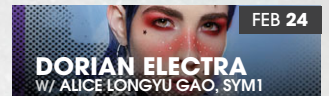
RADICAL FACE
W/ AXEL FLOVENT

FEB 26



REUBEN AND THE DARK
W/ FAUX PRIX

FEB 19



DORIAN ELECTRA
W/ ALICE LONGYU GAO, SYM1

FEB 24



KOCH MARSHALL TRIO AND MARK JOSEPH & THE AMERICAN SOUL

FEB 28



REFUSED
W/ YOUTH CODE, RACETRAITOR

FEB 29



WIRE
W/ WIRE DJS, DJ JAKE RUDH

MAR 03



JASIAH AND \$NOT
W/ haroinfather

FEB 21



PRÓXIMA PARADA
W/ STANLEY

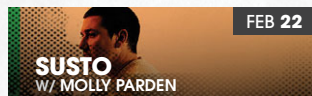
FEB 25

TURF CLUB



CHICAGO FARMER & THE FIELDNOTES
W/ RYAN ACKER OF THE LAST REVEL

FEB 21



SUSTO
W/ MOLLY PARDEN

FEB 22



ERIK KOSKINEN
W/ NICI PEPER

FEB 24



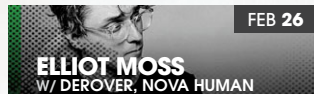
SLOW HOLLOWS
W/ DAD BOD

FEB 22



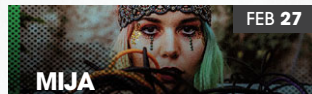
ANNA OF THE NORTH
W/ QUADRY

FEB 26



ELLIOT MOSS
W/ DEROVER, NOVA HUMAN

FEB 26



MIJA

FEB 27



MARK MALLMAN
W/ LUNCH DUCHESS,
THE VON TRAMPS

FEB 28



STAR PARKS
W/ MIKE ADAMS AT HIS HONEST
WEIGHT, KARA LAUDON

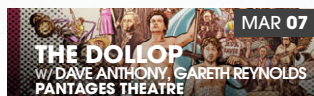
FEB 23



BAYNK
W/ AUSTIN MILLZ, NOLIE

FEB 27

AROUND TOWN



THE DOLLOP
W/ DAVE ANTHONY, GARETH REYNOLDS
PANTAGES THEATRE

MAR 07



THEO KATZMAN
W/ RETT MADISON
THE CEDAR CULTURAL CENTER

MAR 07



WILCO
W/ KACY & CLAYTON
DECC SYMPHONY HALL (DULUTH)

MAR 10



MURDER BY DEATH
W/ AMIGO THE DEVIL
THE CEDAR CULTURAL CENTER

MAR 12



ENTRE NOS
PARKWAY THEATER

MAR 14

A LIST

FRIDAY Meet life over 80,000 years old p. 19

SATURDAY Beer Dabbler and Ballet West p. 19

SUNDAY Immigrant art at Mia p. 21

Immigrants explore their pasts and futures in "When Home Won't Let You Stay."



ALIZA NISENBAUM, MARISSA

WEDNESDAY 2.19

FILM DEATH OF A CHEERLEADER

TRYLON CINEMA

Back in the '90s, made-for-TV movies were all the rage, and they were mostly amazing crap. One shining example: *Death of a Cheerleader*, which aired on NBC in 1994. The story follows Angela

(Kellie Martin), a popularity-obsessed teenager who longs to become BFFs with Stacey (Tori Spelling), a clique-y cheerleader from an affluent family. In order to woo Stacey, Angela does the logical thing: She invites her to a fake dinner party and offers to drive. When she confesses her scam, Stacey is less than impressed, and flees from the car. Angered at rejection, Angela

chases her on foot and stabs her to death with a kitchen knife. After the killing, Angela goes back to life as normal, becoming a candystriper and planning for college... but will she get away with murder? Yes, this movie is based on a true story (almost all made-for-TV movies were). Thankfully, this is a trashy take pretty divorced from the facts of the actual tragedy. 7 p.m.

\$5. 2820 E. 33rd St., Minneapolis; 612-424-5468. —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

COMEDY

LAURIE KILMARTIN

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"My son is 13, so every day is new in a way, but also a lot like *Groundhog Day*," says comedian Laurie Kilmartin. "It's a weird combination of being yelled at by someone who used to cuddle with you while everything else is the same." When not doing standup, Kilmartin has a day job on *Conan* writing the host's monologue along with fellow comic Brian Kiley. She also does a podcast with Jackie Kashian, another fellow comic and Minneapolis fave. "It's been four years now. We sit down every week and talk about how our sets went, standup comedy in general, and what's going on in comedy. There's always some drama." Doing sets, the podcast, and the *Conan* gig doesn't leave much time for a social life. "Between having a kid and my mother living with me, there's no place to have sex here. There's no privacy. Hopefully, I'll hook up with someone in Minneapolis. Someone send your hot uncle to my show so I can get something going." 8 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday; 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. \$15-\$20. 708 N. First St., Minneapolis; 612-338-6393.

Through Saturday —P.F. WILSON

THURSDAY 2.20

DANCE

CALL TO REMEMBER

PILLSBURY HOUSE THEATRE

As part of the Pillsbury House Theatre's Renegade-ism: Artists on the Edge Series, choreographer and dancer Leslie Parker takes the stage with three other black women and nonbinary dance artists. The evening of work, titled *Call to Remember*, will be a mix of improvisation and experimentation, investigating the lineage and vitality of black pedagogy, artistry, and activism in dance. Parker's recent showing in the Momentum series at the O'Shaughnessy soared with dynamic punch. Here she's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19 ►



what's happening in

SOUTH MINNEAPOLIS

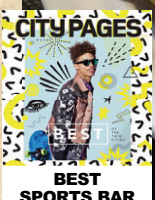
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Yes, these are ceramics inspired by rubber gloves.



DEBBIE KUPINSKY, MANDALA

CONTINUED FROM THURSDAY ►

joined by Vie Boheme, a triple threat whose career has spanned stints with top contemporary dance companies, musical theater, and solo performance. The collaboration also features Brooklyn-based Mayfield Brooks, an improviser, performance artist, and urban farmer; and Stanford artist-in-residence Amara Tabor-Smith, who draws on Yoruba Lukumi spiritual ritual for her Afro surrealist aesthetic. The performance at the Pillsbury House marks the start of a yearlong collaboration among the four artists as they explore memory and remembrance as a way to create community. 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. \$5-\$25. 3501 Chicago Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-825-0459.

Through Saturday —SHEILA REGAN

FRIDAY 2.21

ART/GALLERY

THE OLDEST LIVING THINGS IN THE WORLD

NEWSTUDIO GALLERY

For the past decade, Rachel Sussman has traveled the world with biologists, photographing ancient organisms. The ages of these living organisms varies from 2,000 to over 80,000 years old. Her project has taken her to Antarctica, where she met a patch of 5,500-year-old moss; Australia, where she photographed stromatolites that helped oxygenate Earth; and Greenland, where ancient lichens grow a centimeter a century. “I approach my subjects as individuals, of whom I’m making portraits, in order to facilitate an anthropomorphic

connection to a deep timescale otherwise too physiologically challenging for our brain to internalize,” Sussman explains. The amassed collection eventually became a New York Times bestselling book, *The Oldest Living Things in the World*. This week, she’ll be in town to explain her project, share images from her travels, and discuss how climate change is impacting these locations. Meet her at NewStudio Gallery’s free opening reception on Friday, February 21, from 6 to 9 p.m., followed by an artist’s talk on Saturday, February 22, at 1 p.m. 2303 Wycliff St., St. Paul; 651-207-5527.

Through April 15 —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

ART/GALLERY

OBJECTS IN FLUX

ARTISTRY

Wisconsin artist Debbie Kupinsky’s installations bring everyday objects and ceramic creations together to engender references throughout art history: surrealism, abstraction, minimalism, feminist art. Her use of white and of repetition, which is juxtaposed with her choice of objects, is at once disturbing and engrossing. There’s a sense of the uncanny at work here, along with playfulness and disruption. Meanwhile, Craig Clifford, also from Wisconsin, is a maximalist, layering the objects he creates into ceramic structures teetering beneath the weight of their narratives. There will be an opening reception from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, February 21, and an artists’ talk on Tuesday, March 10, at 7 p.m. Free. 1800 W. Old Shakopee Rd., Bloomington Center for the Arts, Bloomington; 952-563-8575. Through March 27 —CAMILLE LEFEVRE

COMEDY

NIKKI GLASER

PANTAGES THEATRE

Nikki Glaser has pretty much been on tour since 2007. “It’s the never-ending tour,” she says. “The special could have been called, *Nikki Glaser, When Will This End? When I Die*.” Instead, it’s called *Bangin’*, and it debuted on Netflix last fall. “I always wanted to be in the entertainment business,” she says. “I didn’t know it would be standup, but I fell into that because I wasn’t good at any of the other ways to be famous. I can’t dance, although I’m okay at acting and I can sing a little.” As a freshman in college, she had a rather dark thought: “I’ll probably have to take my life at some point.” Suffering from depression and anorexia didn’t help. However, she found standup, and, thankfully, it all worked out for her and for comedy fans. She couldn’t imagine doing anything else other than being in show business. “All I wanted was to be on TV. That’s actually the most morbid thing I can ever admit,” she laughs. 7 and 10 p.m. \$35. 710 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis; 612-339-7007. —P.F. WILSON

SATURDAY 2.22

BEER

11TH ANNUAL WINTER BEER DABBLER

MINNESOTA STATE FAIRGROUNDS

Thanks to the renaissance of craft breweries, beer drinkers now have

access to a vast selection of elixirs, often creatively engineered to match the time of year. Tapping into this seasonal focus, the Winter Beer Dabbler features samples of some 600 beers and ciders from more than 180 companies. The event will provide attendees with a diverse selection of styles to compare before casting their vote for the prestigious Lord Dabbler Cup. Brewers looking for even more competition can tackle an obstacle course to earn the title of American Brewer Warrior (currently held by Modist Brewing Company), while attendees can partake in giant beer pong, a silent disco, and live music. With a meat-and-cheese showcase (sponsored by Lunds & Byerlys) available in the heated Coliseum, the Winter Beer Dabbler looks sure to provide festive provisions in this snowbound season. 21+. Find tickets and more info at beerdabbler.com. 3 to 6:30 p.m.; 2 p.m. VIP. \$50; \$70 VIP; \$20 designated driver. 1265 Snelling Ave. N., St. Paul; 651-288-4400. —BRAD RICHASON

THEATER

SILENT SKY

BELL MUSEUM

Using a planetarium as the venue for a play about astronomy? It’s such a good idea, Theatre Pro Rata had it before the planetarium even existed. Artistic director Carin Bratlie Wethern says the company has been considering *Silent Sky*, Lauren

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21 ►

SATURDAY

DANCE

BALLET WEST: JEWELS

NORTHROP

Recognized by many as the greatest 20th-century ballet choreographer, George Balanchine trained in Russia, where he danced with the Mariinsky Ballet. He fled to Paris after the Russian Revolution, where he choreographed for the Ballets Russes. In the 1930s, he relocated to New York where, inspired by the sleek athleticism of American dancers, he revolutionized ballet. In his three-part work *Jewels*, from 1967, he paid homage to the stylistic influences that shaped him. “Emeralds,” danced to music by Fauré, captures the rhapsodic flow of French romanticism, while “Rubies,” to Stravinsky’s jazzy score, digs into the syncopations and sophistication of urban America. In “Diamonds,” set to music by Tchaikovsky, Balanchine goes back to the future, linking the clear-cut brilliance of 19th-century choreographer Marius Petipa’s imperial Russian style to the blaze and power of contemporary ballerinas. For the Northrop performances, all three gems will coruscate to live music. 7:30 p.m. Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday. \$22-\$47. 84 Church St. SE, Minneapolis; 612-624-2345. Through Sunday —LINDA SHAPIRO



BEAU PEARSON



PAINTING: BNJOUR TRISTESSE BY NICHOLAS HARPET

*PUCCINI'S BELOVED OPERA
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LA BOHÈME

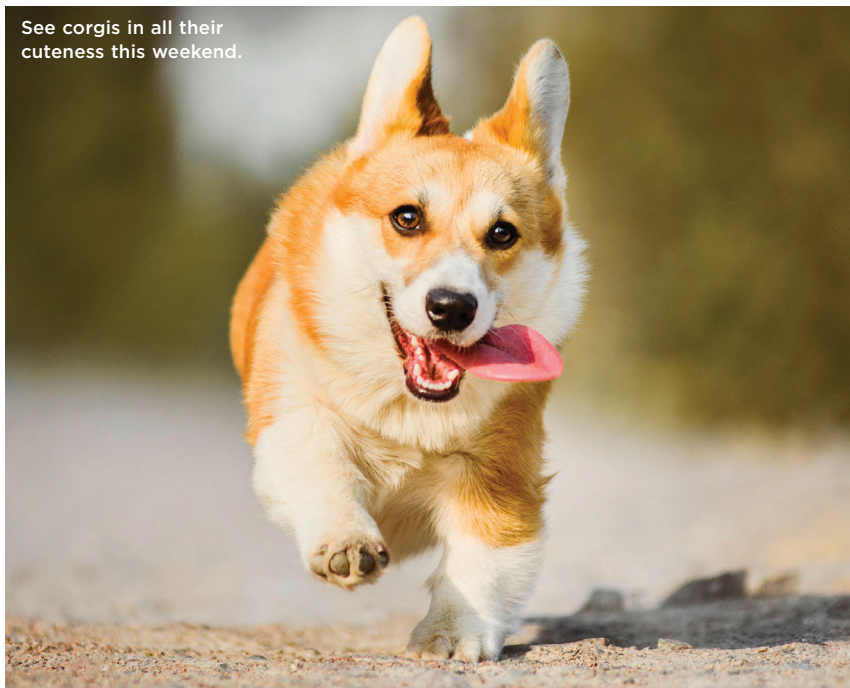
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OLGA KHAZAI

CONTINUED FROM SATURDAY ►

Gunderson's 2011 play about pioneering Harvard astronomer Henrietta Swan Leavitt, for years. "OMG, wouldn't it be wonderful to do it in a planetarium?" she says. "So we actually started talking with the Bell before their new space was even built." *Silent Sky* will be the first theatrical production to be staged in the Bell Museum's new Whitney and Elizabeth MacMillan Planetarium, but it's far from the first time Theatre Pro Rata is forgoing a conventional space: They've worked in a college lecture hall, a defunct movie theater, and even a cemetery. "We're bringing our expertise on that," says Wethern, and the museum staff are "bringing their expertise in creating this beautiful visual world that is going to be surrounding the play." 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; 3 p.m. Sundays. \$15-\$30. 2088 Larpenleur Ave. W., St. Paul; 612-626-9660.

Through March 8 —JAY GABLER

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friendly hangs. Regardless of what you end up doing at this fest, it's going to be stupid cute. Find tickets and more info at midwestcorgifest.ticketleap.com. Noon to 11 p.m. Saturday; 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday. \$10; \$20 VIP; \$18 weekend pass. 5959 Baker Rd., Minnetonka; 612-227-9635. **Through Sunday —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER**

SUNDAY 2.23

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FILM

SONIC YAWN

They fixed the teeth, but didn't think to add any actual jokes



PARAMOUNT PICTURES

BY TONY LIBERA

Sonic the Hedgehog will always have a special place in my heart. It was the first video game I ever owned. It supplied the early high of 16-bit super speed and the life-long fear of drowning in the Labyrinth Zone. Hell, I loved the franchise so much as a kid that I even got into the Archie Comics series.

And yet, no level of fandom can overcome the mediocrity of the *Sonic the Hedgehog* movie.

Video game adaptations have such a brutal track record it's kind of mind-blowing they continue to get made. Be it *Street Fighter*, *Resident Evil*, or the *Tomb Raider* outings, something about the medium just doesn't seem to translate. With that in mind, I actually have to give *Sonic the Hedgehog* some credit. While it's not a good movie, it's at least watchable—and compared to something like *Mortal Kombat: Annihilation*, it may as well be *Parasite*.

The film opens on a faraway planet. A blue baby hedgehog zips through the vibrant flora and familiar loop-de-loops of the Green Hill Zone, as an older Sonic (Ben Schwartz) recalls his happy upbringing.

The salad days are spoiled when a band of bad guys discover our hero's incredible power, and so lilbb Sonic must travel across the universe and hide out in small-town Montana.

It's a lonesome existence, but Sonic stays safe and hidden for years. Then one day he runs a bit too fast, causes an electrical surge, and blacks out the entire Pacific Northwest. In doing so, he draws the attention of the evil Dr. Robotnik (Jim Carrey).

Thus, the groundwork is laid for a fairly uncomplicated kids' adventure. *Sonic the Hedgehog* does repeatedly touch on concepts of isolation, family, and finding your place in the world. However, its execution feels lacking compared to, say, a Pixar flick. I imagine even the youngins could sense the color-by-numbers foundation.

The focus here seems to be mostly on jokes, but *Sonic* doesn't offer much in the way of actual laughs. It's great having kids in these screenings, because they're finely tuned comedy barometers. And if I'm not laughing and *they're* not laughing, I know we've got a problem.

Listen, I can't not love Ben Schwartz. The dude is a comedic genius, and his casting feels right on the money. I just wish he'd

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

directed by Jeff Fowler
area theaters, now playing

gotten more to work with than attention-deficit gags. Same goes for Carrey, who's channeling some of his early-'90s mania but can only do so much with this script. That said, I can't imagine how lackluster *Sonic* would have been without Carrey and Schwartz.

Of course, you can't talk about this picture without bringing up the massive VFX overhaul We the People of the Internet pretty much forced to happen. Sonic's redesign is leagues better than the *Cats*-esque horror show we saw in the first trailer, and the fix probably did save this movie (to the degree it could be considered "saved"). Although one of the unintended side effects of the change is that I spent the entire runtime imagining what things would have looked like with the original toothy design.

Twitter is a cesspool, but it's nice to see that it can, in fact, affect positive change. It'd be great if that power was used to, I don't know, save the republic—but hey, a better-looking, run-of-the-mill Sonic the Hedgehog movie is pretty good, too. **BB**

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PLAY ON

A strong cast and a bunch of balloons make the Guthrie's *Twelfth Night* a delight



DAN NORMAN

BY JAY GABLER

Sometimes you step into view of the Guthrie Theater's Wurtele Thrust Stage and immediately a striking set blows your mind. The scenic design for *Twelfth Night* is more likely to have you scratching your head. What is that ungainly agglomeration of boxy platforms? And why is it standing in a pool of water?

By the end of the show, though, you realize that every crazy corner of Naomi Dawson's set is there to serve the storytelling. *Twelfth Night* is a long play full of outlandish episodes and madcap misunderstandings, and the deliberately abstract set allows the action to unfold both vertically and horizontally, making full use of the Guthrie's most distinctive space.

For all the grandness of the surroundings, there's an appealing coziness to director Tom Quaintance's warm, amusing production. The all-local cast is uniformly strong, and most importantly, the actors (including veterans of Theatre de la Jeune Lune, the Children's Theatre Company, and Ten Thousand Things) know how to work effectively in a comic ensemble.

The production is literally elemental, with both water and air coming into play through that peculiar pool and a series of balloons that multiply like tribbles as the play goes on. (A sign at the entrance warns of "popping latex balloons"—an appreciated advisory for some patrons and an arousing promise for others.) The water serves as both a set element and a prop: Actors walk through it, fall into it, and douse each other with it.

TWELFTH NIGHT

Guthrie Theatre
818 S 2nd St., Minneapolis
612-377-2224; through March 22

If there's one word for the entire show, it's playful. *Twelfth Night* is one of Shakespeare's most breezily enjoyable scripts, as audiences who caught last season's engaging Orchard Theater Collective production were reminded. It's not pure comedy, though. Emily Gunyou Halaas channels anguish as the disguised Viola, and in a movingly luminous final tableau, the actors trade places on an outsized swing.

Crediting this cast is like thanking people at the Oscars: You're afraid to start naming names because you know you won't be able to mention everyone. The actors who make the strongest impressions, though, are the ones who get to most use their comic chops. That includes Sun Mee Chomet, whose hilariously horny Olivia shows why she should get cast in comedies more often; Jim Lichtscheidl, born to play the preening but vulnerable Malvolio; and the extraordinary Joy Dolo, whose Sir Andrew, seemingly a minor character, just about steals this show.

Andrew's a sidekick to Sir Toby, whose bloodstream is cut with both alcohol and irony. Toby's also played by a female actor, none other than the storied Sally Wingert. She snaps right into place here, forming a delightful duo with Dolo in a bit of casting that helps to challenge the gender binary on which the plot ostensibly relies. That plot's unchanged, but the play's the thing, and this production is a pip. 

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DARIN KAMNETZ

SHOWTIME!

What's it like to see a show at the new Fillmore music club in North Loop? We're glad you asked.

BY KEITH HARRIS

Brandi Carlile had nothing but good things to say about the Twin Cities' newest concert venue last Wednesday.

"I love this room," the folk-country singer-songwriter told the sold-out club. "It just feels right."

The club in question was the Fillmore—or, more thoroughly and pedantically, The Fillmore Presented by Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union. (The new site traded in some cool points ahead of opening night for the perks of corporate sponsorship.) Nestled just beyond Target Field in the North Loop, the 1,850-capacity venue launched a week ago with a three-night-stand from Carlile, including a Valentine's Day show, followed by three nights of the locally spawned emos Motion City Soundtrack.

The Fillmore is operated by Live Nation. That name may not mean anything to you, but if you're a regular concertgoer you've almost certainly attended a show they've had a hand in bringing to town. The national promoters book concerts throughout the Twin Cities, at sites as big as the Xcel Energy Center and Target Center, as intimate as

the Orpheum Theatre. Live Nation manages the Varsity in Dinkytown and operates as a partnership with the Armory. (Live Nation also owns Ticketmaster, a name you certainly know and almost just as certainly do not trust.)

But the Fillmore marks the company's first attempt to establish a brick-and-mortar presence in downtown Minneapolis since the Quest, which went kaput in 2006. And the venue is part of a complex spearheaded by United Properties, which is owned by the Pohlad family, who also own the baseball team that plays next door to the Fillmore. There's a 160-room Element by Westin hotel and a Trax Burgers and Bar. Clearly this time they plan to stay.

With the ability to take in 300 more paying customers than the storied club less than a mile away, the Fillmore seems positioned to rival First Avenue's ever-expanding club and booking empire. And for over a year now, people in town have been speculating about how much of an impact the Fillmore will have on the local music scene. As of yet, speculate is all we can do. But now that we've been inside the club itself, we can at

least let you know what you'll see and hear if you go, and whether it's worth a trip.

And the answer is: Uh, sure. It's fine.

On opening night, there were some minor snags in getting people through the doors and past security, though nothing out of the ordinary, and nothing anyone would have noticed if the temps had been above zero. Once you're in, you pass through a wide lobby with the club name glowing on the opposite wall. The decor isn't distinctive but it's not neutral. The general admission floor itself is pretty tightly packed with bodies, but hardly a challenge to anyone with decent club-navigation instincts. Chandeliers dangle picturesquely from high above.

The second floor is where the Fillmore distinguishes itself. Tromp up some broad staircases and you'll find a balcony that wraps around the second floor, offering excellent vantage points. Those privileged sightlines are, as you might guess, reserved for those who shell out for the VIP packages. But the upper level is accessible to the common folk too. There's a mural of Prince, of course, and folks were snapping pics of it. And if it's all too much for you, the most comfy seats in the house are in a mini-lounge area: You can't see the stage from them, but there is a monitor, so you won't totally miss out.

What's most notable about the Fillmore, from a Minneapolis perspective, is that it was constructed from the ground up. In our city of repurposed Greyhound stations and Armories, a music venue built as a music venue is a rarity. So the sight lines are excellent and the sound is clear. It's designed to present a concert.

Still, the Fillmore is not unique—Live Nation owns nine iterations of the venue in cities across the country. That makes our new club the music venue equivalent of a chain restaurant—a comparison that, depending on how snobby you are, may sound more disparaging than intended. It's market-tested, yes, and feels both "new" and yet somehow familiar. And that's where the Fillmore name comes into play.

The pedigree "Fillmore" invokes hardly means much to anybody under 40, or maybe 50. The clubs established in San Francisco and New York by pioneering promoter Bill Graham have a special place in rock history, though, and that borrowed tradition is enough to give the new Fillmore a pre-established semblance of an identity, especially if you're not a hardcore showgoer.

And it's not the hardcore showgoer the Fillmore seems to be targeting. Rather than



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Saturday, February 22nd The Cedar Presents THE CEDAR COMMISSIONS NIGHT TWO with <i>Rebecca Nicholson, Dua Saleh, and Tensae Fayise</i> Doors 7PM / Show 7:30PM / All Ages / \$10 GA / \$15 Pass	Saturday, February 29th The Cedar Presents PERT NEAR SANDSTONE'S WINTER STRING BAND GATHERING with <i>Jon Stickley Trio</i> Doors 7PM / Show 8PM / Standing / \$17 Adv / \$20 DOS / \$30 Two-Show Pass

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MUSIC

attacking First Ave head-on for bookings, the Fillmore seems to be locating the sorts of acts that will sell to underserved suburban audiences looking for a night out in the city. That means older blues acts for deep-pocketed Boomers (who might also make a weekend out of it) and scrappy rock shows for younger fans.

Unlike First Ave, the Fillmore isn't likely to inspire brand loyalty, though if it sticks around it'll become a part of our mental landscape. In the end, its success will come down to a simple equation: Is it booking acts you want to see at a price you're willing to pay? **B**

CRITICS' PICKS

LEXII ALIJAI BENEFIT FEATURING KEHLANI

FIRST AVENUE, WEDNESDAY 2.19
 Kehlani writes alert, detailed songs about romantic convolutions, skillfully synthesizing contemporary pop's shiny chill with the more demonstrative conventions of '90s R&B. Her most recent mixtape, last year's *While We Wait*, abounds with swoonworthy jams ("Feels," "Love Language"), but she's not above recoiling from a relationship in comic horror ("Too Deep"). Proceeds benefit the Lexii Alijai Foundation, set up to honor the local singer and rapper who died at the age of 21 last month. With Sophia Eris and New Black City. 6 p.m. \$35. 701 First Ave. N., Minneapolis; 612-338-8388. —LUCAS FAGEN

TOVE LO

PALACE THEATRE, THURSDAY 2.20
 Tove Lo's sharp, helium-coated electropop has a gaudy sheen, steeped in the glamour of flashing neon club lights and the erotic friction of scraped metallic drum machines. The Swedish singer-songwriter's recent *Sunshine Kitty* is gloriously sleazy, delighting in summer heartbreak laments ("Bad as the Boys"), vicarious kissoffs ("Glad He's Gone"), and unseemly admissions of Francophilia ("Jacques"). With Alma. 6 p.m. \$30/\$35. 17 W. Seventh Pl., St. Paul; 800-514-3849. —LUCAS FAGEN

DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL

FIRST AVENUE, TUESDAY 2.25
 Emo has moved beyond the lilting power ballads of Dashboard Confessional's heyday, but their therapeutic, spiritually cleansing ethos dangles on a string like slow-spinning redemption: Contemporary pop's self-care anthems, sung by yearning everymen, betray Chris Carrabba's fingerprints. Their show celebrates the 20th anniversary of their first album, *The Swiss Army Romance*. With the Get Up Kids. 18+. 7 p.m. \$35. 701 First Ave. N., Minneapolis; 612-338-8388. —LUCAS FAGEN



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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

>> *By Rob Brezsny*

ARIES (March 21–April 19): Do you feel ready to change your mind about an idea or belief or theory that has been losing its usefulness? Would you consider changing your relationship with a once-powerful influence that is becoming less crucial to your life-long goals? Is it possible you have outgrown one of your heroes or teachers? Do you wonder if maybe it's time for you to put less faith in a certain sacred cow or overvalued idol? According to my analysis of your astrological omens, you'll benefit from meditating on these questions during the coming weeks.

♈ TAURUS (April 20–May 20): When she was alive more than 2,500 years ago, the Greek poet Sappho was so famous for her lyrical creations that people referred to her as “The Poetess” and the “Tenth Muse.” (In Greek mythology, there were nine muses, all goddesses.) She was a prolific writer who produced over 10,000 lines of verse, and even today she remains one of the world’s most celebrated poets. I propose that we make her your inspirational role model for the coming months. In my view, you’re poised to generate a wealth of enduring beauty in your own chosen sphere. Proposed experiment: Reared your daily life as an art project.

II GEMINI (M 21-June 20): Have you ever dropped out of the daily grind for a few hours or even a few days so as to compose a master plan for your life? The coming weeks will be an excellent time to give yourself that necessary luxury. According to my analysis, you're entering a phase when you'll generate good fortune for yourself if you think deep thoughts about how to create your future. What would you like the story of your life to be on March 1, 2025? How about March 1, 2030? And March 1, 2035? I encourage you to consult your soul's code and formulate an inspired, invigorating blueprint for the coming years. Write it down!

69 CANCER (June 21-July 22): Cancerian novelist William Makepeace Thackeray (1819-1875) is famous for *Vanity Fair*, a satirical panorama of 19th-century British society. The phrase "Vanity Fair" had been previously used, though with different meanings, in the Bible's book of Ecclesiastes, as well as in works by John Bunyan and St. Augustine. Thackeray was lying in bed near sleep one night when the idea flew into his head to use it for his own story. He was so thrilled, he leaped up and ran around his room chanting "Vanity Fair! Vanity Fair!" I'm foreseeing at least one epiphany like this for you in the coming weeks, Cancerian. What area of your life needs a burst of delicious inspiration?

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Who loves you best, Leo? Who of your allies and loved ones come closest to seeing you and appreciating you for who you really are? Of all the people in your life, which have done most to help you become the soulful star you want to be? Are there gem-like characters on the peripheries of your world that you would like to draw nearer? Are there energy drains that you've allowed to play too prominent a role? I hope you'll meditate on questions like these in the coming weeks. You're in a phase when you can access a wealth of useful insights and revelations about how to skillfully manage your relationships. It's also a good time to reward and nurture those allies who have given you so much.

MP VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Doom and gloom dominate the forecasts made by many prophets. They experience perverse glee in predicting, for example, that all the rain forests and rivers will be owned by greedy corporations by 2050, or that extraterrestrial invaders who resemble crocodiles will take control of the U.S. government "for the good of the American people," or that climate change will eventually render chocolate and bananas obsolete. That's not how I operate. I explore the idea that it's only the nastiest prognostications that are interesting. In that spirit, I make the following forecasts: The number of homeless Virgos will decrease dramatically in the near future, as will the number of dreamhome-less Virgos. In fact, I expect you folks will experience extra amounts of domestic bliss in the coming months. You may feel more at home in the world than ever before.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): I don't require everyone I learn from to be an impeccable saint. If I vowed to draw inspiration only from those people who flawlessly embody every one of my ethical principles, there'd be no one to be inspired by. Even one of my greatest heroes, Martin Luther King Jr., cheated on his wife and plagiarized parts of his doctoral dissertation. Where do you stand on this issue, Libra? I bet you will soon be tested. How much imperfection is acceptable to you?

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Scorpio comedian John Cleese co-founded the troupe Monty Python more than 50 years ago, and he has been generating imaginative humor ever since. I suggest we call on his counsel as you enter the most creative phase of your astrological cycle. "This is the extraordinary thing about creativity," he says. "If you just keep your mind resting against the subject in a friendly but persistent way, sooner or later you will get a reward from your unconscious." Here's another gem from the great English wit: "I don't think that most creative people have learned to tolerate the slight discomfort of indecision for much longer, and so, just because they put in more pondering time, their solutions are more creative."

✦ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Sagittarian philosopher Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677) developed a vigorous and expansive vision. That's why he became a leading intellectual influence in the era known as the Enlightenment. But because of his inventive, sometimes controversial ideas, he was shunned by his fellow Jews and had his books listed on the Catholic Church's Index of Forbidden Books. Understandably, he sometimes felt isolated. To compensate, he spent lots of time alone taking wide-ranging journeys in his imagination. Even if you have all the friends and social stimulation you need, I hope you will follow his lead in the coming weeks—by taking wide-ranging journeys in your imagination. It's time to roam and ramble in inner realms.

♈ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): "Absolute reason expired at 11 o'clock last night," one character tells another in Henrik Ibsen's play *Pee Gynt*. I'm happy to report that that different development is on the verge of occurring for you, Capricorn. In recent days, there may have been less than an ideal amount of reason and logic circulating in your world. But that situation will soon change. The imminent outbreak of good sense, rigorous sanity, and practical wisdom will be quite tonic. Take advantage of this upcoming grace period. Initiate bold actions that are well-grounded in objective rather than subjective truth.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Renowned Aquarian composer Franz Schubert (1797-1828) created more than 700 compositions, some of which are still played by modern musicians. Many of his works were written on and for the piano—and yet he was so poor that he never owned a piano. If there has been a similar situation in your life, **Aquarius**—a lack of some crucial tool or support due to financial issues—I see the coming weeks as being an excellent time to set in motion the plans that will enable you to overcome and cure that problem.

X **PISCES** (Feb. 19–March 20): In 1908, British playwright W. Somerset Maugham reached the height of success. Four of his plays were being performed concurrently in four different London theaters. If you were ever in your life going to achieve anything near this level of overflowing popularity or attention, I suspect it would be this year. And if that's a development you would enjoy and thrive on, I think the coming weeks will be an excellent time to set your intention and take audacious measures.

freewillastrology@freewillastrology.com

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HOT SNACKS

BY BRENDAN EMMETT QUIGLEY

Across

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Hand marks at rock clubs |
| 7 | Drink that comes with a straw |
| 15 | For the full prescribed time |
| 16 | Cadillac luxury SUV |
| 17 | Portugal's area |
| 18 | Extra in "The Irishman" |
| 19 | Tomorrow's vets today |
| 20 | D-Day assault boat |
| 22 | Slab of baloney |
| 23 | Passover soup fillers |
| 27 | Farm enclosure |
| 30 | Members of a brayer meeting |
| 31 | Stuff collected with a swab |
| 32 | Sticky solvent |
| 34 | Inits. in retro gaming |
| 36 | "I got the picture, ick," initially |
| 38 | Huge in scope |
| 39 | White meat selection |
| 43 | One in a spat |
| 44 | Body spray brand |
| 45 | Phone game |
| 46 | Warm "welcome" |
| 48 | Anti-bullying ad |
| 50 | Small amounts |
| 54 | Mic drop, in a proof |
| 55 | British dessert made with suet and dried fruit |
| 58 | Buzzer at a pub |
| 59 | Swarthmore address ender |
| 60 | Guess made while high: Abbr. |

- 61 Gave, as a property
66 Degree holder?
68 Buck naked
69 "Semper Fi" soldier
70 Pictures of tasty things, and the theme of this puzzle
71 Hand holders?
- Down**
- 1 Black mark
2 76ers forward ____ Harris
3 Events that go "kaboom"
4 Riviera draw
5 Nexium alternative
6 Blockbuster
7 Lustrous black
8 Value destroyer
9 "Show me what" cher holding"
10 Loose-fitting tunic
11 "What ____ is there?"
12 Cricket equipment
13 "To a Crossword Solver," maybe
14 Any of the kids on "Stranger Things," for short
21 "I haven't figured it all out yet," initially
24 Top point
25 Outdoor exterminator's target
26 Doner kebab meat
27 Man of the house
28 Cloverleaf branch
29 MOMA's home-a
33 Leumie holder

- 35 Genre with a
horn section
- 37 Fidelity account: Abbr.
- 39 ____ Haan (shoe brand)
- 40 Gang turf
- 41 Event when new products
are previewed
- 42 Labor day shot
- 43 Answer page?
- 47 Not paying attention
- 49 Got goose down
- 51 Power suit embellishment
- 52 Temporarily filling in (as)
- 53 Senators wear them
- 56 Dodgers reliever Báez
- 57 Wax-covered cheeses
- 58 Problem with focusing
- 61 "Makes no ____"
- 62 "Oblique Strategies"
co-founder
- 63 Patton's arena: Abbr.
- 64 Besmirch
- 65 Have in hand
- 67 Procedure with
a test tube?

Last Week's Answer

A	I	L	S		S	P	O	O	F		M	A	D	S
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A	S	T	A		C	B	R	A	D	I	O		M	E
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Thrown Bones

No one but me can make me come—am I broken?

I'm 20, straight, male, fit, and active. I masturbated prone—flat on my stomach—for years. I've now changed to a more traditional position (on my back or sitting upright), and I'm using my hand rather than grinding against a mattress. I can easily orgasm when I masturbate. I've had sex four times in my life, and I'm worried because I couldn't orgasm by someone else's hand, through oral, or during penetration. I felt more sensation with oral or by hand than I did during intercourse, but I couldn't get off. This is extremely worrying, and I am increasingly depressed. Am I broken? Is my sex life ruined?

BOY REELING OVER KAPUT EQUIPMENT

You're not broken, BROKE, and your partnered sex life, which has barely begun, isn't ruined. Even if you're never able to come by someone else's hand, mouth, twat, or ass—and that's the worst-case scenario here—you can still have a rewarding and pleasurable sex life.

In the short run, you need to be honest with your sex partners about the way your cock currently works. Let them know you're going to be mixing some manual self-stimulation in with the penetration. In other words, at some point you're going to pull out of whatever you're in, you're going to jerk it until you reach the point of "orgasmic inevitability" (OI), that split second between the start of orgasmic contractions and the good stuff spurting out, and then put it back in. Since most women need to mix direct clitoral stimulation with penetration in order to get off, your honesty about what you need will signal to your female partners that they can be honest with you about what they need.

The way you used to masturbate—prone—is likely the reason you're having difficulty climaxing now. But lots of men who masturbated in more "traditional" positions have trouble transitioning to partnered sex from solo sex. The inside of a mouth, vagina, or butt, or even another hand, doesn't feel like your own hand. While the excitement of partnered sex helps most guys get over the hump, for many men, it takes time and a little experimentation for their cocks to adapt. But men who engaged in "atypical masturbatory behaviors" as boys—and prone masturbation/humping a mattress



Dan Savage

counts—frequently have a harder transition to partnered sex.

There's a name for what you're experiencing: delayed ejaculation. And while it can be frustrating, the opposite problem—premature ejaculation—is more frustrating and harder to work around. When you look at it from a different angle, your problem—being able to last forever—is really kind of a superpower. Because let's say you fuck some lucky woman for ages, and she gets off again and again because someone—you, her, a third—is stimulating her clit at the same time. Once she's satisfied (or shortly before she's satisfied), you can pull out, jack yourself to OI, then put your cock back inside her and blow that load or take the condom off and blow your load—with her consent, of course—all over her ass or tits or Toyota Corolla or whatever.

Now here's how you might be able to fix this in the long run: When you're masturbating, you should... do what you're doing. Masturbate while sitting up or lying on your back, use your hand and a little lube, but do it with a much lighter touch/grip and maybe invest in a quality masturbation sleeve. The goal is to retrain your cock to respond to subtler sensations. Which brings us to the hardest part: If you can't come after 10, 20, or 30 minutes, you don't get to come. No flipping over and humping the mattress, no using a firmer grip. Put your dick away. You want to let the pressure build in your balls between sessions.

Stick to these rules for at least six months. If your dick can adapt, it will, and then you can take your more sensitive dick into partnered sex with more confidence. But you may have to accept that this is the way your dick works. Just as some women need to use a vibrator in order to come, some men need to pull out, jack to the point of OI, and then plunge back in for the last few victory pumps. It doesn't mean their dicks are broken, and it doesn't mean their sex lives are over. As sexual superpowers go, BROKE, it's a pretty decent one.

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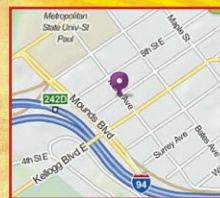


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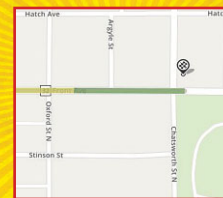
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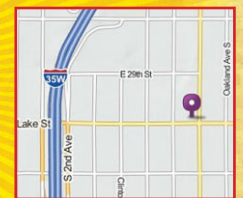
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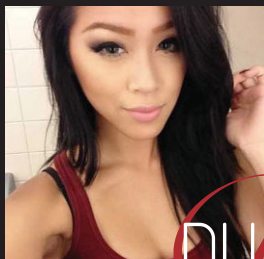
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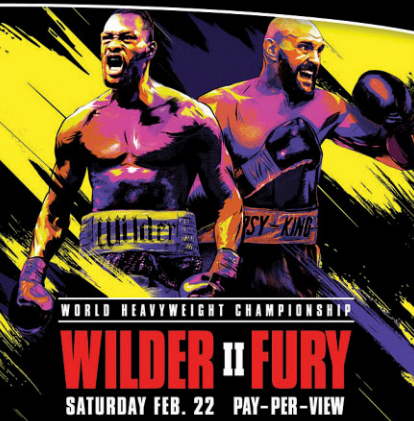


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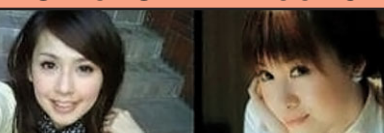
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